## PROSECUTING A SHOPLIFTER:

Washington State allows you to detain a suspect at any time after you have witnessed concealment of your merchandise. However, customers may not be frisked, have their packages randomly inspected, or be searched, unless the suspect has been placed under arrest.

If you suspect a shoplifter, it is generally advisable to let him/her pass the last possible point of payment before apprehending. The suspect does not have to leave the store before you detain him/her. When detained, make sure there is an employee present who is the same sex as the suspect. Female suspects should never be detained in private solely by a male!

Initial contact with the suspect should be verbal, not physical. A non-accusatory approach is necessary. Identify yourself and inquire about the merchandise:

"Excuse me. I am the manager/employee of the store. I believe you have some merchandise which you have forgotten to pay for. Would you please come to my office so that we can straighten out this matter?"

For more tips on preventing crime in your store, contact YOUR Kent Police at 253-856-5851.

## Help Put Griminals Out of Business!



## #CAN I HELP YOU?"

## PREVENT SHOPLIFTING...

Shoplifting is committed by many types of individuals, including juvenile offenders, impulse shoplifters, vagrants, kleptomaniacs, and professional thieves.

Here are steps you can take to harden your business from shoplifters!



nded1980 07/27

TIPS TO HELP PREVENT SHOP



One phrase shoplifters hate to hear is, "Can I help you?" Have employees greet customers as they enter the store.

Keep shelves low and aisles clear to increase visibility and ensure that all areas of the store are well-lit.

When ringing up customers:

- Check the lower racks of shopping carts.
- Watch for switched price tags.
- Inspect containers which could conceal stolen items.
- Tape or staple sales receipt to the bag.
- Show a customer only one valuable item at a time.
- Ensure there is an adequate number of employees working at all times.

Acknowledge waiting customers with, "I'll be with you in a minute." Your customers will like the attention, and the shoplifters won't!

Post signs warning that shoplifters will be prosecuted.

Install annunciators (alarms) on all unlocked doors.



Make it difficult to steal merchandise. Bolt racks down, alternate the direction of hangers on racks, tie appliance cords together, chain bicycles, lock small valuable items in cabinets and show cases, keep valuables away from store exits.

Train employees to be aware of customer behavior:

- Customers who enter in a group and then disperse in the store.
- Customers who might be trying to distract salespeople.
- Customers who linger in a certain area or loiter near stockrooms.